

# NEW CONSTRUCTION

## Commercial and Institutional Design Guidelines

- NC1** Make sure that new designs conform to all other applicable regulations including the Jefferson County Development Code and Zoning District Regulations.
- NC2** Do not demolish contributing structures in a historic district to make way for new or large-scale construction. Non-contributing buildings are identified in each of the district or individual landmark designations or National Register nominations.
- NC3** Design new construction so that the building height, scale, massing, volume, directional emphasis, and setback reflects the architectural context established by surrounding structures.
- NC4** Make sure that the scale of new construction does not conflict with the historic character of the district.
- NC5** Select materials and design elements for new construction that are sympathetic with surrounding historic buildings in the district. Materials should be of a complementary color, size, texture, scale, and level of craftsmanship.
- NC6** Do not use materials in new construction that are visually incompatible with surrounding historic buildings within the district. Materials to be avoided include: ornamental pierced concrete masonry screens and walls, "antiqued" brick, wrought-iron porch columns, chain-link fencing, exterior carpeting, jalousie windows, glass block, picture windows, unpainted wood, and asphalt siding.
- NC7** Have new construction reinforce the human scale of historic districts by emphasizing the base of the building where this is a character-defining feature.
- NC8** Design infill construction that enhances the pedestrian-oriented character of historic commercial districts. Commercial buildings should have a well-defined base at the pedestrian level with details conveying a sense of horizontality and progression along the sidewalk.
- NC9** Design new construction in such a way that it does not disrupt important public views and vistas.
- NC10** Plant canopy trees in front of any large-scale new construction to provide a visual sense of consistency along a streetscape.
- NC11** Reinforce existing patterns of open space and enclosure, created by circulation routes, fences, walls, lawns, and allees of trees, in designs for new construction.
- NC12** Design infill construction that reinforces the spatial organization established by surrounding buildings. The character of historic streetscapes relies heavily on the visual continuity established by the repetition of similarly-designed facades.
- NC13** Design infill construction in such a way that the façade's organization closely relates to surrounding buildings. Cornice lines, columns, and storefronts are other important character-defining facade elements. In the Clifton Preservation District, NC 13 is subordinate to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, items 3. and 9.<sup>1</sup>
- NC14** Design new construction so that the building mass has a similar sense of lightness or weightiness as surrounding historic structures. Mass is determined by the proportion of solid surfaces (walls) to voids (window and door openings). In the Clifton Preservation District, NC 14 is subordinate to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, items 3. and 9 (see fn1.)

<sup>1</sup>The Secretary of Interior Standards Item 3. provides that "All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged." Item 9. provides that "Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment."

- NC15** Maintain historic patterns of window and door proportion and placement in designs for new construction. In the Clifton Preservation District, NC 15 is subordinate to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, items 3. and 9 (see fn1).
- NC16** Develop designs for new construction using windows that are sympathetic to the window patterns of surrounding buildings. Use of comparable frame dimensions, proportions, and muntin configurations is encouraged. In the Clifton Preservation District, NC 16 is subordinate to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, items 3. and 9 (see fn1).
- NC17** Develop designs for new construction using front doors that are sympathetic to the door patterns of surrounding buildings. Use of comparable frame dimensions, proportion, and panel and light configuration is encouraged. In the Clifton Preservation District, NC 17 is subordinate to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, items 3. and 9 (see fn1).
- NC18** Design new construction so that the orientation of the main entrance is the same as the majority of other buildings on the street.
- NC19** Retain the character-defining features of a historic building when undertaking accessibility code-required work.
- NC20** Investigate removable or portable ramps as options to providing barrier-free access.
- NC21** Locate handicapped access ramps on secondary elevations wherever possible. If locating a ramp on the primary façade is required, it should be installed in a way that does not damage historic fabric and is as unobtrusive as possible.
- NC22** Design infill construction so that it is compatible with the average height and width of surrounding buildings. The rhythm of the façade should also reflect the characteristic rhythm of existing buildings on the street. Vertical elements (doors, columns, and storefronts) should be spaced approximately every 20 to 40 feet at the pedestrian level.
- NC23** Design new construction to have a floor-to-floor height that is within 10 percent of adjacent historic construction where the floor-to-floor height is relatively consistent, and a character-defining feature.
- NC24** Incorporate set-back upper stories into designs for new construction that exceed the established cornice line.
- NC25** Maintain the historic rhythm of the streetscape. The space between new construction and existing structures should fall within 20 percent of the average spacing for the block. New construction should be built out to the property lines where this is a character-defining feature.
- NC26** Historic commercial properties have long been anchors in Louisville's preservation districts. Construction of commercial properties on vacant corner lots should preferably be built to the corner with an entrance oriented to the corner.
- NC27** Maintain historic setback patterns. In order to maintain the continuity of the streetscape, setbacks for new construction should either match that of adjacent buildings where all share the same setback or be within 20 percent of neighboring structures in areas with varied setbacks.
- NC28** Ensure that the roofs of new buildings relate to those of neighboring historic structures in pitch, complexity, and visual appearance of materials.
- NC29** Follow the precedent set by adjacent buildings when designing rooflines for infill construction. Where the predominant form is flat, built-up roofs are preferred. Where the predominant form is complex and steeply pitched, that is preferred. In blocks characterized by shallow-pitched roofs and pronounced overhangs with exposed rafters, these elements should be incorporated. In the Clifton Preservation District, NC 29 is subordinate to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, items 3. and 9 (see fn1).

**NC30** Design new construction so that the orientation of the main roof form is parallel with the majority of other roofs on the street where roof forms are relatively consistent and a character-defining feature.

**NC31** Design new construction to emphasize the existing cornice line on each block where this is a character-defining feature.

**NC32** Integrate mechanical systems into new construction in such a way that rooftops remain uncluttered.

**NC33** Make provisions for screening and storage of trash receptacles when designing new construction.

**NC34** Use an exterior sheathing that is similar to those of other surrounding historic buildings.

**NC35** Use masonry types and mortars that are similar to surrounding buildings in designs for new construction.

**NC36** Do not use modern "antiqued" brick in new construction.

**NC37** Design parking garages so that they relate closely to adjacent structures.

**NC38** Design new construction so that access to off-street parking is off alleys or secondary streets wherever possible.

**NC39** Generally, leave at least 20 percent of a parking lot's surface area unpaved and planted. All parking lots must meet the minimum requirements of the city's Development Code. Perimeter landscaping, fencing, colonnades, or other construction that visually continues the building line along open sidewalks is encouraged.

**NC40** Generally speaking, parking should be located in the rear.

**NC41** Design required new parking in such a way that it is as unobtrusive as possible and minimizes the impact on the historic setting. Shared parking areas among groups of businesses is encouraged.

**NC42** Do not build additional surface parking lots within the West Main Preservation District.

**NC43** Incorporate storm-water management provisions into the design of new construction, so that any related runoff will not adversely impact nearby historic resources.

**NC44** Do not create additional open space within the West Main Historic District.